

## VicRoads Association Newsletter No 193



Membership of the Association is available to all who have been members of VicRoads or forerunner organisations or the spouse of deceased members and bestows on them all the rights of the Rules of Association. Current cost of membership is a once only fee of \$30 plus a joining fee of \$5. Enquiries about membership or receipt of the Newsletter by e-mail should be directed to the Secretary at 60 Denmark Street Kew 3101 or by phone or e-mail as shown in the footer below. An application for membership of the Association can be found at the end of the Newsletter.

Dear Members,

This is the last newsletter for 2016. My main mission in this newsletter is to remind you about our Christmas lunch on 5th December at 12 noon. Numbers are limited. We can only take about 50 people due to the limited seating capacity on the mezzanine floor in the Head Office cafeteria – so if you do propose to come, we will take bookings in strict order of receipt. All the details are provided later in this newsletter.

Our program for 2017 is not yet finalized but it will be very similar to this year's. There are many huge infrastructure projects being undertaken in Victoria at the moment and we propose to keep up with the latest developments and progress – by revisiting many of these authorities. I encourage you to come along to as many as possible. Our program will be included in the February 2017 newsletter.

At this time of year our thoughts turn towards Christmas – especially the joy and excitement it brings in reuniting families and friends. I have celebrated Christmas in both the southern and the northern hemisphere. How different it is! On my first Christmas in England in 1964, we went to Norfolk to a house full of friends. It snowed heavily on Christmas Eve – more snow than I had ever seen – and we walked down to the pub for a rum and blackcurrant. The locals were surprised to see a dozen or so Australians in their local pub and they welcomed us by singing Waltzing Matilda to us in swirling rounds. I think a few of us teared up thinking of home. The following morning, Pam and I built a snowman in the front garden, complete with a carrot nose. My brother had arranged for a slab of Foster's lager to be sent over as a Christmas gift and we stuck the cans into the snowman using him as a ready-made refrigerator.

That morning we walked down to the edge of the sea and went tobogganing on the golf course.

We cooked a grand Christmas dinner and exchanged modest gifts but the real gift that Christmas was the friendship we developed with our fellow travellers – and they have remained our friends ever since. We love them. It snowed the following year too but by this time we were living in rural Shropshire and we were parents. Sara was born three weeks before Christmas. Our next door neighbours, Peter and Cecile Williams, owned a lovely old black and white hotel called the White Horse Inn and so we went next door and joined their family for Christmas. It was the first time I had ever eaten pheasant. The Williams family was very kind to us and when we left our cottage Peter's parents bought it from our landlord. Again, we have remained friends with the Williams family. Whenever we've been back to England we call to see them. We went back for their 50th wedding anniversary and they have visited us in Australia. Peter loves Australian wine – which he serves at his pub and restaurant – and last time he was here, he bought 168 dozen bottles to export back to the UK. At their wedding anniversary, a black tie affair, they served Australian wine and the speeches were in English, German and French. Cecile is Swiss born and she and Peter are fluent in all three languages.

And that is only two Christmases! Next year I might describe my memories of Christmases as a child living in the bosom of a large, extended family. I extend my warmest wishes to you and hope you all have a great Christmas

Enjoy the read.

David Jellie - Editor

## Dates for your diary

Our program this year is as follows:

DATE		TIME	EVENT
December	Monday 5	12 noon	Christmas lunch at Head Office
<b>2017</b>			
February	Monday 6	12 noon	Occasional lunch, Shoppingtown Hotel
	Friday 24	TBA	VicRoads Association Golf Day

Please note that the visit to the Western Link Project (Transurban) scheduled for 24 November has been postponed. The project is in the throes of establishing a new office and we have had problems finding an appropriate venue. Transurban have agreed to reschedule the visit until early next year, details of which will be included in our February newsletter.

## New members

**We welcome John Griffith, Geoff Symons and Varis Abel to our association.**



At my request, John has provided me with a summary of his career at VicRoads and I hope to provide similar details for Geoff and Varis in future newsletters.

John retired from VicRoads in October 2012 after 26 years of service, having worked in many RTA/ VicRoads Departments, namely: 1986 – 1987 Program Development; 1987 – 1989 Seconded to a Research Project on Single Vehicle Run Off Road Crashes; 1989 – 1991 Traffic Management Services to North Eastern Victoria (from the Benalla Office); 1991 – 1996 Road Safety; 1996 – 2001 Servicing of 2 National Road Programs (Austroads); 2001 – 2003 Corporate Planning; 2003 – 2006 Traffic & Road Use Management; 2006 – 2009 Seconded to ARRB (Vermont) for 2.5 yrs for the Austroads National Guides Program; and 2009 – 2012 Road & Traffic Standards.

His longest stint in any one department was with Road Safety when he took on the role of Hazardous Poles Co-ordinator where a program was devised to relocate dangerous kerbside utility poles to either the property boundary or in some instances, to underground the service.

His Road Safety role eventually led him to become an Austroads Program Assistant to David Anderson and the late Kerry Burke – a role which took him to all parts of Australia and across the ditch to New Zealand - a very rewarding and enlightening role.

The two and a half years secondment to ARRB (2006 – 2009) initially involved overseeing a program of producing multiple new Austroads Guides covering a broad range of Road Design and Traffic Management related topics. He subsequently became Project Co-ordinator for the then new Austroads Bridges Guide which was published in nine parts in 2009.

John's last three years of employment with VicRoads covered linemarking and signage standards, providing for road users with disabilities, reviewing Road Rules Victoria, road lighting, parking and clearway issues, and Traffic Management advice to metropolitan and rural regions of Victoria. This included annual presentations on some of these topics to internal and external audiences.

Since retiring in 2012 he has taken on a part-time bus-driving career with Panorama Coaches in Diamond Creek. John continues to serve as a volunteer of the Wattle Glen CFA and he is a Life Member of both the Brigade and the CFA.

## What's coming up

### Occasional Lunches – Shoppingtown Hotel – Monday 6th February 2017

Bookings are not essential, but it would help with arrangements if you can let Kelvin York know on 9438 1028 if you can attend. We hope to see you there. Incidentally we had a record attendance for our luncheon in February.

### Christmas Lunch – Head Office, Monday 5th December at 12 noon

The location and arrangements for the lunch will be the same as for last two year. Drinks will commence at 12 noon with lunch being served at 12.30 p.m. The cost will be \$40.00 per head and we require prepayment either by cheque or bank transfer.

If you propose to come, please fill out the acceptance form attached to the flyer enclosed with this newsletter, and post it – together with your cheque – to:

Jim Webber  
Secretary VicRoads Association  
c/o Natalia Morgan  
60 Denmark Street Kew, Vic 3101.

Cheques should be made out to VicRoads Association. Direct bank transfers should be made to VicRoads Association BSB 083323, Account Number 170934017 and you should include your name as a reference – so that we know who has made the payment. If you choose to pay by transfer, we would appreciate it if you ring or e-mail Jim just to let him know that you are coming.

Please respond by Wednesday 30th November to allow sufficient time for catering arrangements.

Please also note that lunch will be again served on the mezzanine floor of the cafeteria (first floor, north east wing).

Again I remind you that numbers are limited and we will take bookings by date of receipt. So put this date in your diary straight away and send in your application in the flyer enclosed.



# WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING

## Geelong Visit – Wednesday 14th and Thursday 15th September 2016

### Jim Webber reported as follows:

Sixteen members, partners and colleagues attended a very enjoyable two days in the South West Region at Geelong in September. While more attended than last year's visit to Ballarat (where we had 10) it is an event that should be enjoyed by more of our members

### VicRoads' South Western Region

VicRoads' Regional Director Mark Koliba was very helpful in putting together an interesting program for our day with VicRoads. Nigel Powers and Dave Fary in combination gave us an excellent briefing on the wide range of issues facing the Region. The Region, which extends from Geelong to the SA border, has a current population of 424,000 which is forecast to increase to 579,000 by 2030 (a growth rate of around 2.5%). It has a staff of 150, comprising personnel from both VicRoads and the South Western Maintenance Alliance an alliance between VicRoads and Fulton Hogan for road maintenance.

The presentation included the devastating effect of trucks bringing in road materials for the internal roads on wind farms (and the Region's role in coming up with a strategy to eliminate the problem), the significant works program on the Great Ocean Road, the relationship with the South Western Maintenance Alliance, the growth in woodchip exports at Portland and the role of the Green Triangle, and the revitalisation of Geelong's CBD.



Ted Barton, David Jellie, Colin Roy, George Rumbens, Jim Webber, Zigrid Rumbens, John Rebbechi, Dave Fary (South Western Region), Joan Gilmer, John Liddell, Nigel Powers (South Western Region), Kay Webber, Noel Osborne and Peter Hassett at the site of the new bridges across the Barwon River at Barwon Heads (of Sea Change fame). The bridge on the left carries road traffic and has a timber substructure with steel girders and a composite concrete deck and has timber faux corbels on the outside to give it the appearance of a timber bridge. The bridge on the right is a pedestrian and cycle bridge. It has a concrete substructure and superstructure. The concrete beam is encased in a timber lattice work – again to give it the appearance of a timber bridge.



Following lunch in the office, we were then taken on an interesting and informative coach tour. This was all the more appreciated given the impacts of the terrible weather the Region was experiencing at the time of our visit with the Great Ocean Road closed, another 100 roads closed and one bridge wash out. This tour took us to new and expanding developments close to Geelong on the Bellarine Peninsula, the Surf Coast and the recently opened section of the Princes Highway West down to Winchelsea.

Mark Koliba joined the group for dinner on the Wednesday evening.

### Deakin University School of Engineering

We were given a guided tour of Deakin University's School of Engineering CADET (Centre for Advanced Design and Engineering Training) by Associate Professor Matthew Joordens and Craig McGill. The tour proved a real eye-opener as far as the approaches used to learning - a far cry from the lecture theatre format experienced by many in our group.

We observed several examples of student activities - a huge interactive 3D model capable of showing a complex item of mechanical equipment or a model of a pregnant woman (used in Australia and internationally to train mid-wives), developing and building solar-powered vehicles, exploring the benefits of solar and wind technology in the power laboratory, 3D printing, food flavor technology - plus a startling display in a Faraday cage.



### Epworth Geelong Hospital

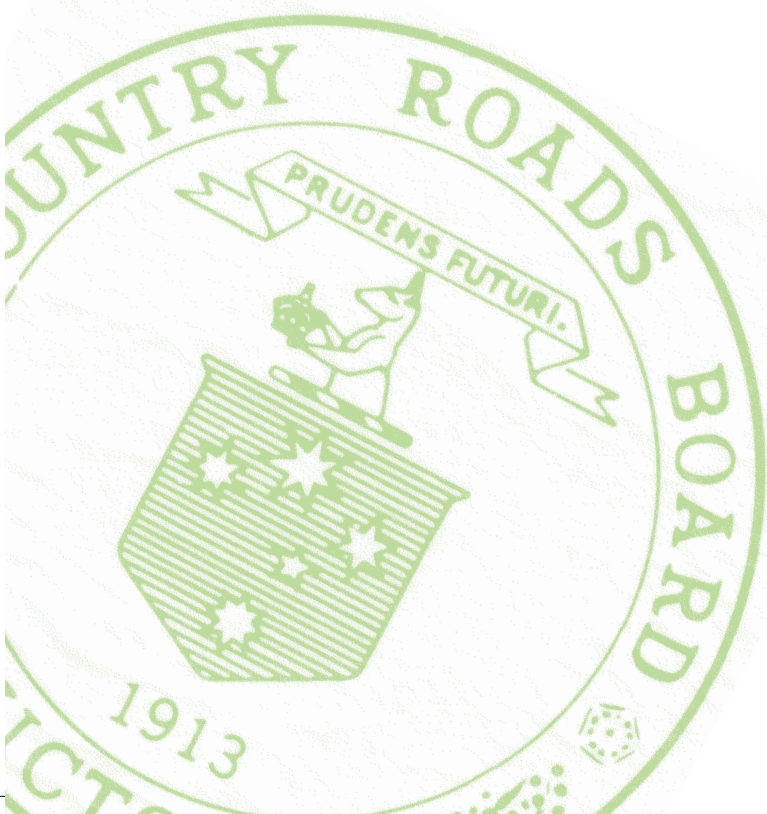
The state-of-the-art hospital opened in July this year. We were given a presentation and tour by two very enthusiastic and committed senior managers - Susie Thomas, Business Development and Marketing Manager, and Steve Ball, Facilities Manager. This superb hospital was built in just 18 months with provision for future expansion.

I also want to acknowledge the assistance of Alastair Robinson in helping us design the program. Unfortunately Alastair was away on holidays and could not join us.

### A bit more about South Western Region

The South Western Region has two main offices at Geelong and Warrnambool. Both sites are shared offices with Customer Services Centres. The offices consist of 62 staff - 34 operations, 23 planning and 5 Regional support personnel. In the South Western Alliance there are 88 VicRoads and Fulton Hogan staff working across the two Regional offices in Geelong and Warrnambool and across six depot sites in Geelong, Warrnambool, Apollo Bay, Derrinallum, Ballarat and Hamilton.

The region extends from halfway between Werribee in the East to the South Australian border in the West - as shown in the map above. The current population of the region is about 425,000 people but it is expected to rise to 580,000 by 2030. The bulk of this increase is in the Geelong area.





Before construction of the wind farm



After construction of the wind farm

There are four major tourist centres in the region – the Great Ocean Road, the Bellarine Peninsula, the Southern Grampians the Otway Forest. The region is rich in diverse industry. For example, the Port of Portland is now the biggest wood export terminal in the world. On average, it exports enough timber to fill the MCG every three to four weeks. It is also Australia’s premier dairying centre now producing close to a third of Australia’s output and the Great Ocean Road is one of Australia’s premier tourist attractions with 7 million visitors annually, generating \$2.1 billion annually. However the recent heritage listing provides additional challenges for the region as it now means that the road must meet heritage standards. It is proposed to deliver a renewal program valued at \$50 million over the next four years.

The region has high levels of rainfall compared to the rest of Victoria. In the Otway Forest it can rain up to 275 days a year with an annual rainfall of 2,500 mm – more than four times Melbourne’s rainfall. Not only does it have more rain but it also has a lot of wind with wind-generated electricity becoming a burgeoning industry. However it is bringing with it an additional burden for VicRoads because of the damage being caused to hitherto lightly trafficked roads by heavy haulage truck traffic. For example, the following damage occurred following heavy rains during peak haulage periods (of around 1,000 trucks per day, during the construction of the Macarthur Wind Farm – on the Hamilton – Port Fairy Road.

The map to the right shows the variety and scope of industry in the region.

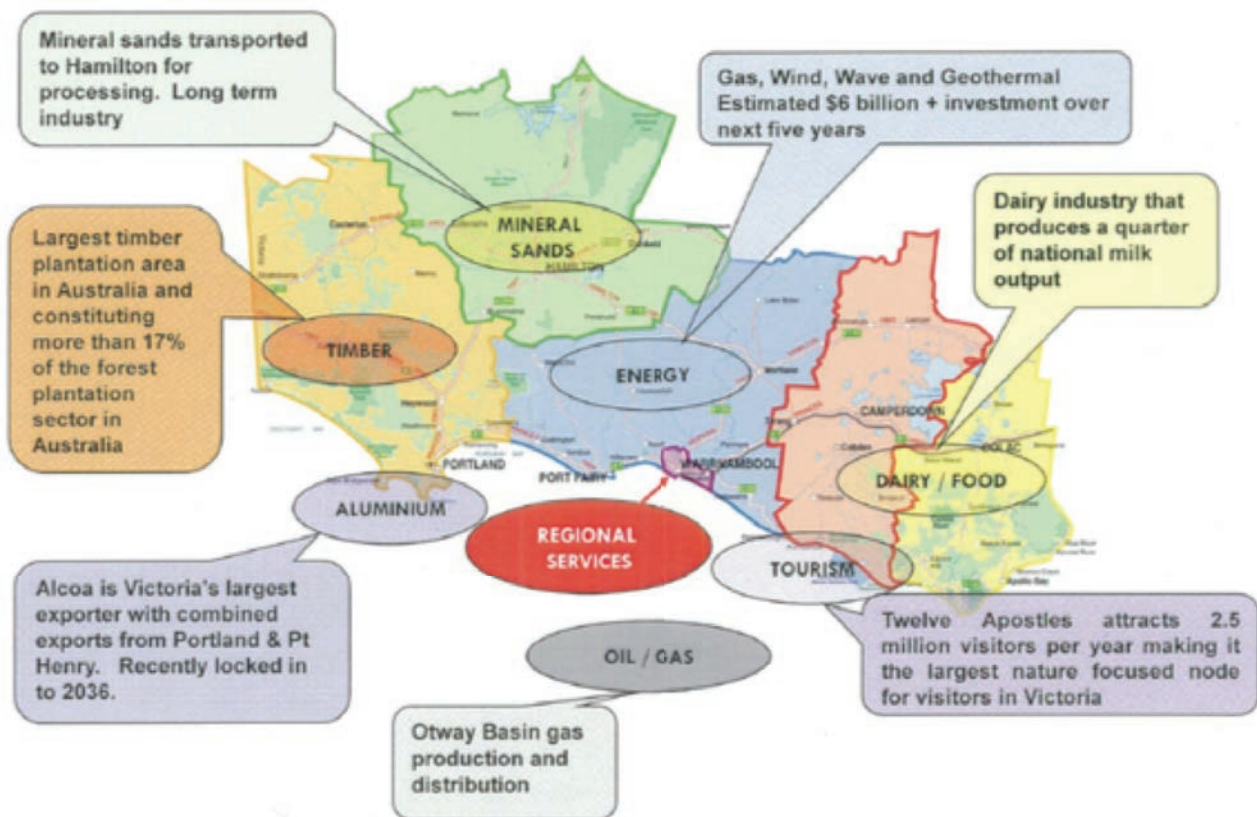
The key regional issues are:

- Managing recent restructuring initiatives
  - maintaining levels of service to growing customer expectations
  - managing the recent loss of knowledge and experience in the region and rebuilding the team capability
- Deteriorating pavement conditions
- Implementation of a new Maintenance Alliance
- Growth in Geelong and need to future proof the road and public transport network
- Armstrong Creek Growth Area
- Port of Geelong Access
- Bellarine Link Road
- Geelong Central Activity Area revitalisation – truck management, City in a Park, 40km/h speed limit
- Town Bypasses – Drysdale, Colac, Hamilton, Bannockburn
- Wind farm developments
- Avalon Airport redevelopment
- Quality and availability of natural resources for road construction and maintenance



With regard to planning and transport issues, the region is addressing the following issues:

- Implementing the Safe System approach for the Geelong-Bacchus Marsh Road
- Planning for of the transport network for key growth areas
- Completing (and successful implementation) of the Wind Farm Guidelines for eight wind farm projects (having an estimated total cost of \$6 billion)
- Developing the Great South Coast Regional Transport Strategy
- Drafting the G21 Regional Transport Strategy
- Strategic transport planning initiatives such as the roll out of the Victorian Integrated Traffic Model to Geelong, Torquay & Drysdale, and the Avalon Airport Master Plan
- Issuing about 120 permits for non-road events
- Continuing to drive freight efficiency and unlock productivity in the region by investigating and planning for improvements on the transport network including:
  - last mile access issues for the heavy vehicle supply chain
  - rail freight modal shift initiatives
  - access to ports
- Continuing to provide high quality whole of Transport/ Government responses to various planning issues – working closely with DEDJTR
- Leveraging funding from councils and other government agencies for key pieces of strategic planning.





## VALE

**Dorothy Docking died in September in her 101st year. She was the wife of Frank who was, among other posts, the Divisional Engineer in Dandenong Region.**

**Stanleigh Richard (Rick) Clarke died on 31 July 2016, aged 94. I am indebted to Roger Gamble for the following obituary.**

Rick, prior to his long career as a surveyor, served in the RAAF and the RAF as a bomber pilot during World War II. He commenced his surveying studies after he left the Air Force. He qualified as a Licensed Surveyor in 1950 while working with a private survey practice in Melbourne. He joined the CRB as a Licensed Surveyor in the early 1950s in the new and growing Title Survey Section at the Exhibition Building. However as the CRB expanded it wasn't long before the Title Survey Section had to relocate to "Saint Martins in the Field", a smallish former church hall around the corner in Queensberry Street. During this time, Rick was a senior surveyor carrying out surveys around the State whilst also assisting in the management of a rapidly growing Title Survey Section.

The next move was to the spacious new CRB Head Office at 60 Denmark Street, Kew. Rick continued to have a leadership role and contributed significantly to the growth of the Section's activities with other areas of the CRB and the wider survey activities throughout the State.


Rick became the third leader of the Section following the retirements of Syd Atkinson and later, Theo Lester. He was an extremely competent and visionary manager and ensured that the section adopted the best modern technology, new computer systems and that all surveys were fully integrated within the CRB and the State. Part of his vision was to combine the various survey and mapping functions that were operating separately throughout the CRB. After a significant amount of work he brought all groups together to form the Survey and Mapping Division. This new Division included title surveying, engineering surveying, geodetic surveying, cartography, photogrammetry, survey development photography and all the survey and mapping records.

Rick was a leader in the survey profession throughout the State. He was an active member of the Institution of Surveyors (Aus) and was President of the Victorian Division of the Institution during 1971 and 1972. He was appointed as a Member of the Surveyors Board of Australia for a two-year period from 1975 to 1977 where he and other Members were responsible for the Registration of Surveyors and maintaining and developing the application of cadastral surveying and standards throughout Victoria.

There is no doubt that Rick was a 'big picture' person who contributed very positively to the work of the CRB and the development of the survey profession generally. He actively encouraged the staff in his Division to develop and to use and adapt all the new technology and knowledge that was rapidly becoming available.

His contribution was considerable!

After his retirement from VicRoads, he moved to Barwon Heads with his wife and enjoyed a long and healthy retirement. It is interesting to note that one of his sons, Drew Clarke, is also a surveyor who worked for many years in several Commonwealth Government Departments. Drew has had a somewhat stellar career and is currently the Chief of Staff to our current Prime Minister, Malcolm Turnbull.





## CENTENARY STORIES

### VicRoads Olympians

**I was asked to write a story for the internal VicRoads magazine called 'Frog and Toad'. The theme for the August edition was the Olympic Games – and this is an expanded version of what I wrote.**

When I joined the Country Roads Board (CRB) in 1961, I soon became aware of its sporting culture. I played football and represented the Engineers in their annual grudge match against Administration. These games were played at an oval in the outer eastern suburbs on a Sunday afternoon and they attracted a large following of CRB staff supporters. Quite a few VFL players (and ex-VFL players) took part although I can't ever remember our own Brownlow Medallist, Gordon Collis of Carlton, playing. It was quite serious. We even had training sessions on the Xavier oval.

We also enjoyed annual sporting competitions within the CRB – mostly hosted by our regional divisional offices. These were summer events and included tennis and cricket – for men and women. I think bowls and squash were included later. A similar competition, commencing in 1962, was held each year with the Public Works Department of Tasmania. The interstate competition alternated between Tasmania and Victoria usually lasting three days. Special leave with pay was granted to CRB participants and a senior officer accompanied them as the Chef de Mission – a predecessor to Kitty Chiller.



This is our first tennis team - 1962. From left to right at the back, John Hanks, Gail Crawford, Jan Kenner, and George Bray. Kneeling are David Reid and Merv Williams (captain).



And this one is our first cricket team - 1962. The back row – from the left - is Les Holt (umpire), Les Beecher (Secretary of the CRB Social Club), Keith Elliot, Ian Le Page, Gary Edwards, Jim Webber, Jock Langlands, Max Palmer and Jack Mackie. On the bottom row – Morrie Johnson, Peter Hosking (a District cricketer with St Kilda), the captain, Noel Allanson (District representative of Essendon and a Victorian state player), the Chef de Mission, Gerry Masterton (Chief Bridge Engineer at the time), the vice captain, Graeme Deany (also the captain of the Victorian Baseball team and an Australian representative and member of the Hall of Fame), Geoff Brown and Bill Saggars – who supplied me with the photographs.



There is another photograph I want to include.

The participants also took their support team. This one was taken in Launceston in 1972. The two sons of Max Palmer (the older one Andrew, forthright leader of the gang) flanked by Bill Saggars' two boys, Alan on the left and Andrew on the right. They met for the first time and got on together like a house on fire.



However when I cast my memory to our representation at the Olympic Games I could only think of two members of staff who represented Australia, and a couple who nearly made it. Our only gold medallist was Michael McLean and his story is truly inspiring. He won his medal at the 2000 Sydney Paralympic Summer Games in the Solar Class yachting. Michael was the last cadet engaged by the CRB and he was a surveyor. He was injured at work and was confined to a wheelchair. He took up sailing with such energy and determination he now competes in championship events around the world. Michael's older brother, John, was an engineer who worked for the CRB. John went on to become the CEO of the City of Greater Ballarat and the City of Greater Bendigo.



**Bill and Erica Hooker**

Bill Hooker – an engineer – was a world-class 800 metre runner who represented Australia at Commonwealth Games level. His personal best was 1:45:36. His wife, Erica, was a long jumper and pentathlete who competed in the Munich Olympic Games. She also competed in two Commonwealth Games – Christchurch in 1974 and Edmonton in 1978 where she won a Silver Medal. Their son, Steven, captured the heart of Australia when he won the Olympic Gold medal in the pole vault in 2008 in Beijing – smashing the Olympic record. He achieved a leap of 5.96 metres. His best leap of 6.06 metres is the third highest ever recorded. He also won Gold Medals at the World Championships (2009), the World Indoor Championships (2010), and the Commonwealth Games (2010). He has a personal best time of 10.82 seconds for the 100 metres and has competed in the Stawell Gift. I think we can claim him as a son of VicRoads. I don't think Bill and Erica would mind.



**Michael (on the left) and his fellow team members with their gold medals**

Martin Flanagan wrote an article in The Age about the dedication of Michael's wife Kathy. He said "He (Michael) works with a coach, John Mooney, and a sports psychologist, Gavin Dagley, but the mainstay of his career is his wife. Not only does she organise his campaigns down to the finest detail (getting to Athens for this year's world disabled championships involves raising \$65,000), she does the manual labour that maintains the boat. She had to teach herself how to maintain his boat, acquiring skills in areas such as marine electronics and driving the crane that launches the boat."

Rodney Fox competed in the 1972 Munich Olympic Games as a canoeist. He was eliminated in the semi-finals. He was the son of Freddy Fox who was a clerk with the CRB. Freddy worked on the construction of the North-South Road between Alice Springs and Katherine during the Second World War. Before his departure, the CRB held a special reception for Rodney to wish him well. Jessica Fox, who represented Australia in canoeing at the Rio Games, is no relation.

Perhaps the unluckiest tale of all is that of engineer Ken Hall. He was Australian 1500 metres champion in 1975 and 1977. He ran a mile in 3 minutes 55.2 seconds, 1500 metres in 3 minutes 36.6 seconds and 5000 metres in 13 minutes 31 seconds. He missed out on selection for the 1976 Olympic Games because of injury. Ken competed at the very highest level against the likes of John Walker who broke the world record for the mile with a time of 3:49.4 set at Göteborg, Sweden on 12 August 1975. This was 10 seconds faster than Roger Bannister's iconic sub-Four-Minute Mile of 3:59.4 that was run 21 years earlier. Ken was placed second behind Walker in that race and was the fifth fastest in the world that year.



#### Ken Hall running second to John Walker's world record mile

By his own admission he was not a great sprinter but he always won the 800 metres and 1500 metres events at school. He won the Australian Junior 1500 metres championship at 18. When he was 23 he received training advice from Ron Clarke who was a multiple world record holder and who had revolutionised running through his sheer talent and tough training techniques. His advice helped Ken to improve from 3.48 min to 3.36 min. for the 1500 metres event in 18 months. Ken was involved in the 2016 Rio Olympics as an athletic coach.

The highlights of his athletic career were racing throughout Europe and in front of packed stadiums where world records were being broken. The big meets were incredibly exciting and the adrenaline levels were high. He often raced against John Walker and actually beat him in one race about six months after he had won an Olympic gold medal for the 1500 metres at the Montreal Olympics in 1976.

Patsy Kennedy at VicRoads reminded me of another Olympian, Rayoni Nelson (nee Head), who represented Australia in Badminton at the Sydney Olympics in 2000. She won a bronze medal in the 1998 Commonwealth Games in the women's team event. She brought her bronze medal into work and walked the two buildings at Kew so that people could see the medal up close. Everyone was excited and thrilled to have an Olympic medallist in their midst.



#### Rayoni Nelson – Bronze Medallist at the Sydney Olympics

In the Sydney Olympics, Rayoni won through to the second round of the women's singles – beating a player from Canada in her first round. She was 24 years old at the time and competed in events to qualify for the Olympics as well as training about 20 hours per week while doing her full time job at VicRoads. She worked at VicRoads from 1997 to 2007 in a range of positions involving customer relationships, communications, community programs and marketing in commercial Services Division, the Road Safety Department and the Registration and Licensing Department. She also worked in India as a publicity specialist for the Kerala State Transport Project managed by VicRoads International. She was also the Communications Manager for the Commonwealth Games Planning Project.

And then Jeff Briggs reminded me of another Olympian – although he competed for another country. This is what he wrote:

'Zoltan Szigeti (b 17 Dec 1932) was a Hungarian sprint kayaker in the mid to late 50s. He won a gold medal in the K-4 1000m at the 1954 World Canoe Championships in Macon, France. Based on that achievement, he was selected in the K-2 event at the Melbourne Olympics in 1956. However he was eliminated in the heats.



Zoltan (in the front position)

Just a few weeks before the Melbourne Olympics, the Soviet Union invaded Hungary. About a week before the Hungarian team left Hungary, an uprising began. Eventually Soviet troops crushed the uprising, killing about 25,000 people. There must have been a huge temptation for the athletes in Melbourne to defect, and 46 did. It seems that most went to USA, but Zolly stayed in Australia and took up mechanical engineering. In 1966 I commenced working with the CRB at the Plant Maintenance Depot in Coleman Parade, Syndal, and there I met Zolly. In 1967 I transferred to Kew, so never saw him again, but I remember him as a bloke with a great sense of humour - an all-round good fellow.

I also recall hearing that Zolly had been, or was, the coach for one of the Australian kayak teams at one of the Olympics – but I’m not sure of this. He certainly was associated with the Fairfield Canoe Club where they award the annual Sziget Medal.’



Tim Disken

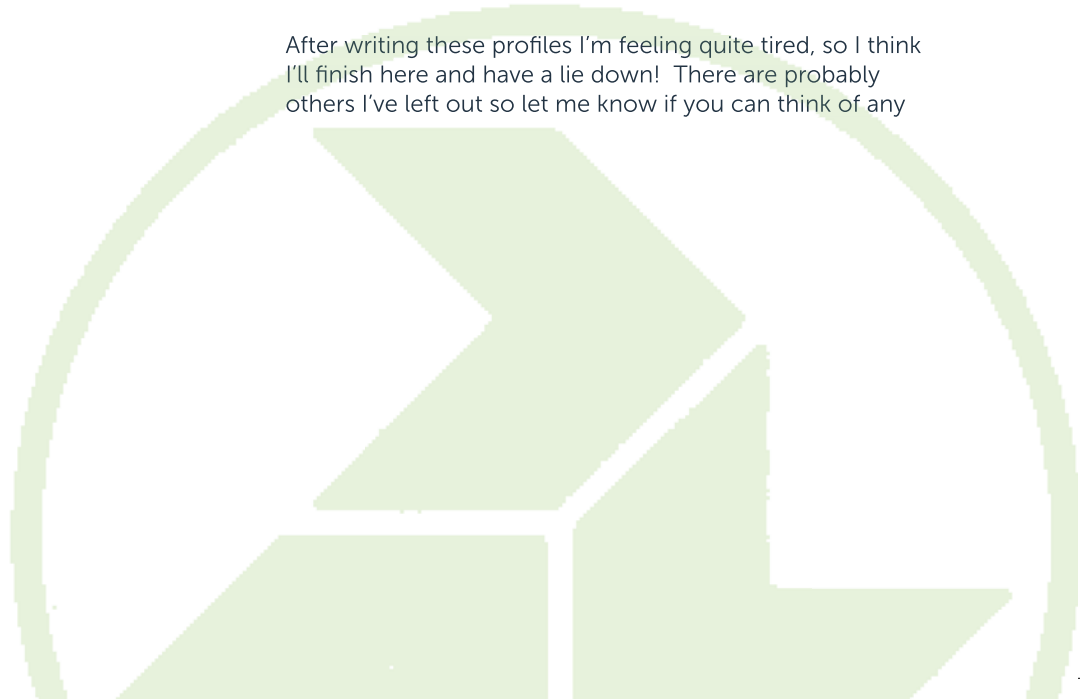
And then, just as I thought I had finished this story, Jim Webber sent me an email to say that we had another connection with the Rio Paralympics. Many of you will remember George Wittingslow who worked in the Human Resources Department in the 60s and 70s. George’s grandson is Tim Disken – a champion swimmer. He represented Australia at the 2015 IPC Swimming World Championships and won bronze in the Men’s 4 x 100 m freestyle relay. At the 2016 Rio Olympics, he performed brilliantly winning a gold medal in the Men’s 100 m Freestyle S9, a silver medal in the Men’s 50 m Freestyle, and a bronze medal in the Men’s 200 m Individual Medley SM9. Tim started swimming when he was four, as a form of therapy for his cerebral palsy and now he is a champion of the world. Amazing!

But wait – I’ve just thought of another one! Vic Asher’s son, Simon, was a dual Olympian, competing in the 1988 and 1992 Games. The Australian team came 8th in Seoul (1988) and 5th in Barcelona (1992). I think Vic himself was a player and Simon probably derived his interest from his father. Vic was also a referee.



Simon and Sally Asher

After writing these profiles I’m feeling quite tired, so I think I’ll finish here and have a lie down! There are probably others I’ve left out so let me know if you can think of any



# NEWS FROM OUR MEMBERS

## Les Malseed

We have been informed that Les is not at all well and has been admitted to Frankston Hospital and because of poor circulation has had to have a leg amputated.

## Tom Smallman

Tom Smallman provided these reminiscences of the Yarra Track (slightly edited because of length):

Gus Warner arrived in Matlock around Christmas time in 1861 with all his belongings on his dray, drawn by a change of horses. He was coming to a miner's 'promised-land' - the most recent goldfield of a string of such 'rushes' that began on the Goulburn River where it is now drowned by Lake Eildon. The new discoveries moved relentlessly up the river, creating a string of settlements at Jamieson, Gaffney's Creek and Wood's Point. It climbed to the summit of the Great Dividing Range at Matlock. Gus had been part of this continuous rush along the river and its tributaries, from his gold-winning exertions on the nearby Big River, where a creek there carries his name. He returned to Melbourne in late 1860 to marry his sweetheart, and now they had worked their way to the top and over into Gippsland to try their luck on the new Jordan field. But now Fanny carried with them baby William in her arms, and the makings of Mary Alicia inside. They really were tough people!

But Gus and Fanny prospered up there in the mountains on the chilly Divide and down the Jordan River to Jericho. At the rich Garibaldi Creek field a couple of miles east of Matlock on the Jericho road, in March 1865, Gus announced the opening of the new hotel he had just finished building. The easy-won gold in the creeks was diminishing and the industry increasingly turned to deeper reef mining, in which companies had to be formed to amass capital to bring in steam-driven heavy machinery, like huge stampers for crushing the lode quartz. The more prosperous miners like Gus bought shares, but from that time on the principal shareholders were usually wealthy city folk, and so handy blokes like him turned more and more to commerce. He had 'arrived'.

Getting to Jericho from Matlock one went easterly along the Divide, past the headwaters of the Garibaldi Ck. for about 4 km, then off to the south down a spur for about another 4 km where the settlement of Jordan was located on the Jordan River.

But suddenly fickle fortune turned her back on him, and instead of lavishing his future customers in his new 'house', he found himself facing the sticky Supreme Court mess of insolvency. He miscalculated his finances, could not pay a finishing-up debt, was brought before the Magistrate, and forced by these dire circumstances to plead insolvency. This meant losing all assets except the bare necessities to survive.

Insolvencies are an historian's delight because they usually reveal all kinds of personal facts and figures that would otherwise have been lost forever. Gus' listing of his assets is quite revealing. He had borrowed £100 from a local investor to build his pub, it seems, and had put a small value on the couple's clothing but put no value on a Matlock home built on Crown land, and £8 each for two horses "running in the bush" - whatever that meant.

The information about his horses is tantalising, suggesting all kinds of different activity in his business operations. For Gus to have those "horses running in the bush" seems to me to suggest he had been using them to pack supplies. The horses of the many packers of the time bringing supplies to the diggers were understood to be normally overworked during their arduous treks and so needed long rest periods afterwards; so maybe packing had been one of his many occupations there as well. His declaration that the reasons for his misfortune were - "From losses of horses, and cattle, bad debts, and pressure of creditors" does seem to imply other involvement than just his hotel and supplying milk. Fanny is later on record as running a milk business.

Getting to Melbourne by coach until 1865 necessitated going back the way they had come, up the Goulburn. The coach road went down through Jamieson and Mansfield, then around in a big arc through Longwood and Kilmore - a very long way to travel the direct distance of around 100 miles.

Most men of those times got around on horseback, and so Gus would have come down to Melbourne by another route - a 'bridle track' - which was more direct, parts of which were in use since the 1850s. A Lands Department sketch-plan done in 1865 shows the route. Basically, this route known as the Yarra Track roughly followed the present road from Lilydale through Healesville, Marysville, Cumberland Junction and along the Great Divide to Matlock.

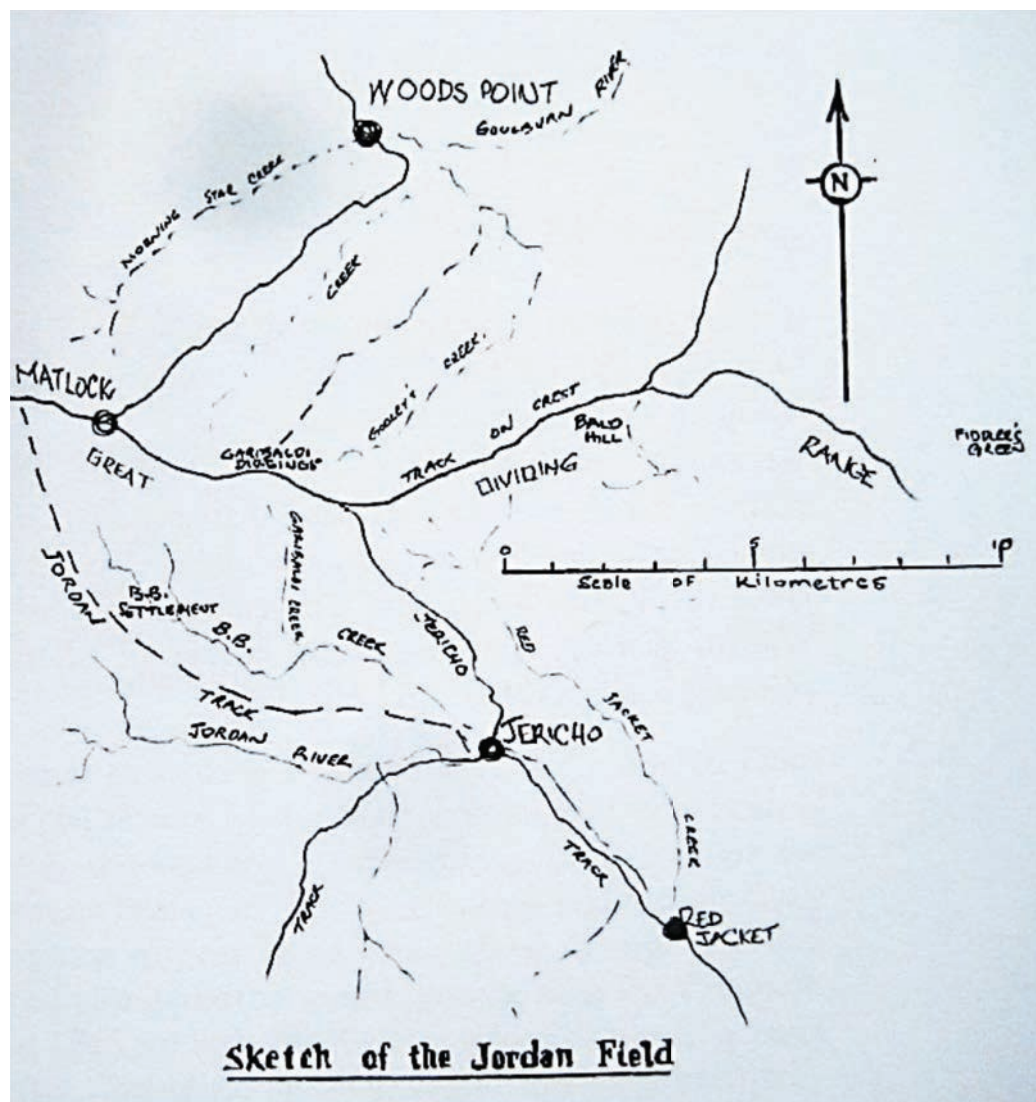
The new Jordan rush was for much of this early period home to hundreds of alluvial miners living rough along the creeks and watercourses, but they were mostly prosperous and usually making far better than the normal wages of the time. Many had families in the settlements and worked hard to qualify for voting - a mark of prosperity. So it's easy to forget how bustling were these early settlements; Matlock even had a suburb, cheekily named Toorak!



Now fast forward 84 years to 1949. On Wed. 9 March, a great-grandson of Gus Warner (Tom Smallman – the author of this story) stepped out of the survey-van on to the Yarra Track. At the time I had no knowledge of this family history. I was working on a large road project to complete the new road to Woods Point. The old route was soon to be flooded by the rising waters of the new Upper Yarra Dam. Sid Atkinson, my master-surveyor, had done the necessary survey to complete the other section up from McMahons, known then as the Reefton Spur Road, in 1946-7.

I had been seconded to Plans and Survey and their survey section under the direction of John Turnbull (Uncle John) to get experience in engineering survey CRB style, and had worked with Mac Wilkinson on the Borung Highway up in the Mallee until he left around Christmas to marry, holiday, and resume as a draftsman. After completing the office work for that project I was now at this time working as assistant to Ron Simpson for this last month of my secondment.

Two survey-parties, the other being that of Frank Mau, had been allotted this first stage of the work and had around this time penetrated some 10 to 16 kilometres along the range. For most of its length the track was fairly well defined through the bush, especially in narrow sidling cuttings, and on the relatively level parts along the crest of the ridge. Much of it comprised an old corduroy road, consisting of closely packed timber laid crosswise, some of it still in surprisingly good condition. Information from the others was that convict labour had done it all, so that one sensed the long-forgotten history of the place. Nevertheless, many parts needed careful driving in our non-four-wheel-drive vehicles, especially after heavy rain which was quite frequent. Boggings were frequent and unfortunately were too often late in the day. And the accepted understanding was that if either party was late back for dinner the others saved them whatever food might be arranged or scrounged.



Sadly for us, the camp here, not far from Cumberland Junction at the start of the project, and situated down by the creek under Mount Arnold, was not a CRB camp but operated by the Forestry Commission in the area. Further to that, we had to dine with their men and they were a rather colourful lot, to say the least. The police checked-out the place frequently. But the accommodation was spacious enough and we had the use of a hut with furniture for office-work.

Ron Simpson's assisant was Max Doig. Ron is well remembered by many as a committee-member of our Association for many years. All this time with the section Ron held a municipal engineering qualification, as well as being a Licensed Surveyor, and was later Shire Engineer for the shires of both Melton and Pyalong. He was a great help to me in the subject of astronomy required for qualifying for competency and licensing.

The Board of Works (MMBW) insisted that this new road should be kept off the top of the ridge and be located on the Goulburn River catchment side. They always did their utmost to protect their Yarra catchment, even to the extent of bringing in portable toilets for their workmen when necessary. We didn't mind the northern-side preference because naturally it was on the sunny side of the ridge.

The camp provided lunch each day, as they did for all their field workmen. It was always ploughman-style bread sandwiches of meat and pickles plus a slab of fruit-cake – and it was welcome indeed. As a place to work it was trying, and on showery days extremely so, because lots of clearing had to be done almost continually as the job progressed. Toiling in wet-gear and sweating underneath was uncomfortable to say the least. Some fine days wet-gear was necessary for an hour or so too, on starting when clearing, if the upper foliage was moisture-laden from a heavy dew. Occasional fog (low cloud) added to the difficulties.

The area had been recently aerial-seeded and most of the scrub consisted of fairly closely-packed saplings up to about 15cm. diameter. Fortunately these young eucalypts were soft and so were usually felled with two well-placed cuts of a slasher. Large trees were avoided. Scrub-bashing was hard on apparel too and cow-boy type chaps of tough canvas were provided. Anyway, they were invigorating days and the experience is now a pleasant memory.

New technology had also been introduced for this project. The whole ridge had been specially flown for low-level aerial photography, the overlapping photographs studied stereographically to determine the best way for dealing with the country ahead. Wet days in the 'office' were put to good use for this. My spell on this rather different job came to an end for me at Easter, after which I was transferred back to Survey & Records, later to be sent off to Benalla on another job.



This photograph was taken during a lunch break. At the back are Tom Smallman, (unknown) and Max Doig. Reclining are Frank Mau and Bob Brown. Gordon (unknown) is sitting. Ron Simpson took the picture.





## Tony Fry and the Scanlon Foundation

**Many of you will remember Tony Fry from CRB, RTA and VicRoads days. I see Tony regularly and have learnt that he is the Vice President, Community Hubs Australia and a consultant to the Scanlon Foundation. He was for ten years the Chief Executive Officer of the Foundation overseeing the professional direction and development of the organisation.**

The Foundation was established in 2001 by businessman, Peter Scanlon, to enhance and foster social cohesion within Australia. Peter's view is that the peaceful settlement of millions of people ranks among our greatest achievements as a nation. New Australians strive to find belonging and acceptance, to forge new bonds of kinship, friendship, community and home. It is in our interest both economically and socially to provide support along the way.

With the notable exception of Australia's First Peoples, Australia will always be a migrant nation. Our migrant history shapes us as a nation and that for Australia to continue to advance as a prosperous and welcoming nation, monitoring and supporting social cohesion is vital. Early in its establishment, the Scanlon Foundation saw an opportunity to develop a longitudinal research that would monitor the health of social cohesion within Australia and now drives the 'Mapping of Social Cohesion' national surveys that is a key driver of allocating foundation funds in the community for best impact.

Tony mentioned to me that leading up to the decision to commence these annual surveys in 2007, and they have been repeated every year since then, he was inspired by his previous management of the National Association of State Road Authorities "Economics of Road Vehicle Limits Study" from 1973 -1976 which was undertaken under the leadership of a Steering Committee chaired by Tom Russell. This vision to take a national perspective had a great impact on him. It is also worth mentioning that Jim Webber was a member of the Study Team: his focus was on analysing Australia's bridge population and their ability to withstand increased heavy loads.

The Foundation acknowledges that the challenge for migrants to settle in a new country can present many barriers, even more so for those from refugee backgrounds. Through its community support the Foundation aims to address and overcome these barriers. It takes great pride in Australia's diversity and the dynamism and richness of culture that it creates.

Complimentary to the annual "Mapping of Social Cohesion" surveys the Scanlon Foundation commissioned Monash University to undertake a further in-depth survey during 1975 called *Australians Today*. The media release, summarising the results, is provided below.

'Freedom, democracy, and our standard of living are rated the best aspects of Australian life by both recent migrants and those born here, but some groups are happier than others, a new Scanlon Foundation report shows.

*Australians Today* – produced in partnership with Monash University and the Australian Multicultural Foundation – highlights findings of the largest ever survey of people born in Australia and recent migrants, on their experience of Australian life. More than 10,000 respondents completed the survey across 20 languages.

The research outlines public attitudes to key issues, by pathway of immigration and country of origin. While Australia is generally considered as a good country for migrants, analysis of the findings is not positive across all groups, with some experiencing high levels of dissatisfaction and discrimination.

Most happy and prosperous of recent migrants were those arriving in Australia on a 457 Business visa, with 90% satisfied with life in Australia. In contrast, many arriving on an Independent Skill visa struggle to find work, and nearly half indicate they are just getting along or struggling to pay bills.

*Australians Today* report author, Professor Andrew Markus, says the difference in satisfaction levels between 457 visa holders and those on Independent Skill visas is significant.

"The proportion of Independent Skill visa holders indicating a measure of difficulty is more than double that of 457 visa holders. A likely explanation is that 457 visa holders have work arranged before they come to Australia," said Prof Markus.

Humanitarian entrants, while satisfied with life in Australia, struggle to find work and report increased financial hardship over time.


Among those least satisfied are New Zealand Special Category Visa holders, with some 50% indicating that they have experienced racism or discrimination in Australia - the highest level among the visa categories analysed.

"New Zealanders are not considered migrants and are not accepted as permanent residents, even though large numbers base their lives in Australia. These visa conditions also contribute to a low sense of belonging in Australia.

"More than a quarter indicated they had no sense of belonging in Australia, compared to 5% from the UK and 1% from India," said Professor Markus.

Discrimination remains a serious issue, with highest levels reported by Indigenous Australians and some African national groups.

More than three in four (77%) South Sudanese migrants – a relatively new immigrant group in Australia, arriving largely via the Humanitarian program – say they have experienced discrimination. This is the highest level of all respondent groups.



Among this group, reported experience of physical attack, property damage, and lack of trust in police was significantly higher, compared to Australian born residents. Negativity toward Muslims is also relatively high in Australia, with Muslim women reporting 50% more experiences of discrimination than Muslim men.

Prof Markus said the research highlighted the level of polarisation on immigration and cultural diversity.

“The majority of Australians support the immigration program. Some 56% are supportive of the current intake or consider that it could be increased. However, when asked what they least like about Australia, 18% of people born in Australia indicated there was too much immigration,” said Prof Markus.

Focus group findings also provided evidence of segmentation in major cities. “Many Australians live in the context of cultural diversity, for them, diversity is the normal way of life. But for others, little has changed since the days of the monocultural society of their parents,” said Prof Markus.

Scanlon Foundation CEO, Anthea Hancocks said the Australians Today report provided valuable insight for government, business and the community. “The Australians Today report shows a number of positive indicators relating to life in Australia from various perspectives, including recent arrivals, but it is important that the challenges identified are considered and addressed,” said Ms Hancocks.

The Australians Today report builds on the data collected from the Scanlon Foundation’s Mapping Social Cohesion reports. The full report is available at [scanlonfoundation.org.au/australians-today](http://scanlonfoundation.org.au/australians-today)

## TRIVIA AND DIDACTIC WHIMSIES

### Percy Lay

In Newsletter 191 I wrote about Kerras Burke’s father, Eric Keasy Burke’s participation in the Dunsterforce campaign at the end of the Great War. This prompted Jim Webber to mention that Max Lay’s uncle also participated in the Dunsterforce campaign – but as I was soon to learn, there was much more to tell. I think the easiest way for me to describe Percy’s story is to reproduce the entry on him in the Australian Dictionary of Biography – Volume 10, 1986, by J. G. Williams.

‘Percy (Perce) Lay (1892-1955), soldier and farmer, was born on 8 February 1892 at Ballan, Victoria, son of Edward Lay, farmer, and his wife Annie, née Slack, both Victorian born. Before enlistment in the Australian Imperial Force on 19 August 1914 he worked as a sheep and cattle dealer for W. J. Andrews of Ballarat. He was posted to the 8th Battalion and embarked for Egypt on 19 October. The 8th landed at Gallipoli on 25 April 1915 and from then until the evacuation Lay continually volunteered for dangerous patrols. He was promoted lance corporal in June, corporal in February 1916 and sergeant next August. On the Western Front particularly, in 1916-17, he showed the remarkable coolness, courage and determination which made him a legend in his own battalion and in the A.I.F.

Lay won his first decoration during fighting near Pozières on 18 August 1916. When the 7th and 8th Battalions attacked, he and three others managed to get into the enemy trenches but were assaulted with bombs. When Lay’s bombs were exhausted and he realized that the second attacking wave would not reach the trench he left it, carrying one of his men who was wounded; despite heavy fire he successfully brought him in. When his company was relieved in the front trench he remained behind and assisted the relieving company commander. His own company commander recommended him for the Victoria Cross but on 20 January 1917 he was awarded a Croix de Guerre avec Palme.

For his courageous actions during the 2nd battle of Bullecourt on 8-9 May 1917 Lay was awarded the Military Medal. When his unit was exposed to constant artillery barrage and repeated counter-attacks Lay, wounded during the first few hours, declined to go to the rear until the battalion was relieved. During the attack he was of ‘invaluable assistance’ and at one stage left a newly captured post to bring in six prisoners, ‘belting the hide off them with his tin hat’.



At Polygon Wood near Ypres on 20 September 1917 Lay won the Distinguished Conduct Medal. When his platoon commander was wounded he took charge and led the platoon through a barrage to the assembly position, into the attack, and on to the final objective. The success of the attack was very much due to his inspiration. Nine days later, in the field, he was commissioned second lieutenant. At Broodseinde, east of Ypres, on 4 October he was awarded the Military Cross. After all the other company officers had become casualties he took command during a critical period of the attack. During the final fight for the ridge his unit was opposed by a field-gun firing at point-blank range. Ordering his company to take cover he and two other men worked to the right flank of the gun position. They then attacked with bomb and bayonet, killing the entire crew and capturing the gun. General Sir William Birdwood sent him a personal letter of congratulations.

Before the 3rd battle of Ypres concluded Lay was to again show his courage. During the Canadian attack at Passchendaele he reconnoitred the German forward positions on the Keiberg. Charles Bean described Lay's reconnaissance as 'magnificent scouting'. He was detached in 1918 for special duty with Dunsterforce in Persia and in February was promoted lieutenant, A.I.F. On 9 March 1919 he embarked for Australia and was demobilized in June, soon afterwards establishing a small farm at Alphington, Melbourne.

During World War II Lay served in garrison, works and training units in Victoria, reaching the rank of major. He then remained at Alphington until illness forced him to enter Heidelberg Repatriation Hospital. He died there, unmarried, on 28 August 1955 of a cerebral tumour and was cremated. His estate was sworn for probate at £19,459.

An archetypal digger, 'Perce' Lay was greatly admired by his mates. Many felt that he was the bravest man in the A.I.F. and he was often compared to Albert Jacka and others. His medals and a portrait by W. B. McInnes are held by the Australian War Memorial.'



An archetypal digger, 'Perce' Lay was greatly admired by his mates. Many felt that he was the bravest man in the A.I.F. and he was often compared to Albert Jacka and others. His medals and a portrait by W. B. McInnes are held by the Australian War Memorial.' W B McInnes' portrait of Percy Lay and a photograph showing Percy wearing his medals.



## Testimony to Dedication and Focus

This photograph is not as bad as it appears. Apparently his wife got out safely and he did par the hole. I suppose a divorce would be simplified seeing there is no house to consider.



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